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group recalls a similar rendering of the theme in the Mazarin tapestry of the Kingdom of Heaven, formerly in the Morgan Collection and well known to Museum visitors. The scenes on the right of the Coronation have not yet been identified; the problem is complicated by the fact that the composition of this part of the tapestry is obviously incomplete. As the original cartoon was undoubtedly a symmetrical design, part of the tapestry may have been destroyed, or, as sometimes happened, part of the cartoon may have been omitted when the tapestry was woven.

On the left, however, the tapestry is complete, and we recognize the Tiburtine Sibyl revealing to the Emperor Octavian (Augustus) a vision of the Virgin and Child. The attitude of the Emperor accords with the instructions of the mystery plays of the time, from which we learn that the Emperor, attended by three of his officers, removed his crown when he beheld the vision, and, taking a censer from an attendant, burned incense before the Virgin and Child. It is interesting to note that in the foreground of the tapestry may be seen a woman carrying a censer. The upper scene is illustrative of Proverbs 9:1, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars"; the four women occupied in building the house are Temperance, Prudence, Charity, and Modesty. In the lower corner at the left is a seated figure of a man holding a scroll with an inscription which can not now be read owing to meaningless restorations. The subject of the scene above is Solomon's choice of wisdom. When God, appearing in a dream to Solomon, said, "Ask what I shall give thee," Solomon chose "an understanding heart," that is to say, wisdom. In the representation of the scene, a female figure, escorted by an angelic messenger, brings (or reveals) to Solomon the symbolic heart.

The parallelism between the flaming heart, symbolic of wisdom, and the Christ-child, whom the Virgin shows to the Emperor Octavian in the adjacent scene, is intentional. We are to understand that Christ is the Wisdom (the Logos) of God, for in this sense, the "house" which Wisdom (Christ) "hath builded" signifies his

Mother, the Virgin Mary. These scenes, apparently unconnected, of Wisdom's house, Octavian's vision, and Solomon's choice are therefore in reality closely related to the principal theme of the tapestry, the glorification of the Virgin. J. B.

## A LOAN FROM THE POPE FOUNDATION

THE Museum is fortunate in having an opportunity to exhibit in its galleries a number of nineteenth-century paintings of the finest quality lent by the Alfred Atmore Pope Foundation. Lent by Harris Whittemore to the Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings last summer was a picture formerly in the same distinguished collection. This, the Interior by Degas, one of his comparatively early works, proved to be one of the most enjoyable pictures of the exhibition. The marvelously refined painting of its every square inch not only gave continual pleasure to lovers of the pictures of earlier times but also compelled the deep respect of those who have surrendered themselves to the admiration of the most recent artistic developments.

Thanks to the present loan, Gallery 21 is enriched by two other pictures by Degas, and these illustrate again at their finest two later phases of his work. Both pictures were painted in the middle eighteenth-eighties. One, an oil painting of ballet girls, shows several of these delectable performers in the immediate foreground. Few painters in all history have given to flesh such beautiful quality. The Bather, a pastel evidently of the same period, shows a young woman standing in a tub and bending to dip her sponge into the shallow water. The drawing, keenly alive at every point, has in addition the quality of sensuous color with a rendering of atmosphere which he sometimes ignored in his later work.

A third picture by Degas, a small and characteristically piquant painting of race-horses, hangs in the next room, Gallery 20. On the same wall is shown the fine painting of Lawyers by Daumier from the same collection.

Another interesting group of pictures

included in the present loan consists of two comparatively early paintings and one drawing by Manet. *La Posada*, painted about 1863 when Manet was under the spell of the Spaniards, is a distinguished and brilliant performance in black and colors against a yellow background. It is scarcely more than a sketch, recalling—perhaps inspired by—the most dashing manner of Goya. *La Joueuse de Guitare*, which Duret says was painted about 1867, is one of the portraits which Manet made of his sister-in-law, Berthe Morisot. Another such was the charming *Le Repos* exhibited at the Museum last summer. A drawing for the early *Buveur d'Absinthe* (1859) has also been received on loan but has not yet been placed on view.

Of the paintings by Claude Monet there are four. *Fishing Boats* is the earliest. The spectator looks down from above at small sailing boats almost silhouetted against a luminous green sea. The *Poppy Field*, a later picture, is painted with the method of broken color, as are also the two other landscapes not yet placed in the gallery. These are *Haystacks—Mid-Day* from the famous series, and *Rocky Headlands*.

A small picture of exquisitely reticent color and modeling is the finished study by Puvis de Chavannes showing a portion of his great painting *La Paix* in the Picardy Museum at Amiens, which marked the beginning of his success. There remain to be mentioned three paintings by Whistler. The *Blue Wave* still betrays the vigorous influence of Courbet. It is mentioned in the *Whistler Journal* (page 162), "The next summer, 1862, Jo and Whistler were together in the Pyrenees stopping at Guéthary and Biarritz where he painted the *Blue Wave*." Westminster Bridge was painted the same year and went to the Academy of 1863, bearing the title, *The Last of Old Westminster*. It was painted from a window in Manchester Buildings where Scotland Yard now stands. The portrait of Carmen presents, of course, not the Spanish cigarette girl of fiction, but Whistler's Neapolitan model, Madame Carmen Rossi, the Carmen who opened in 1898 the short-lived academy at which Whistler gave criticisms.

H. B. W.

## CRETAN REPRODUCTIONS

LAST December we were able to show some new reproductions of larger Cretan and Mycenae objects. This month we are exhibiting new copies of examples of the Cretan "minor" arts.<sup>1</sup> Though small in size, the artistic value of these statuettes and reliefs and pieces of jewelry stands high, and as objects illustrative of Cretan life and religion they are of paramount interest.

Through the ceaseless investigations of the last century we have now reached a sufficient understanding of classical Greek art to feel eminently at home in it; only rarely does a subject arise which we cannot readily interpret. By dint of a thorough study of the numberless monuments at our disposal and extensive reading of Greek literature we have found our bearings. In Cretan art we have not this feeling of confidence. We are still groping in the dark. It is true that enough monuments have now been unearthed to render certain subjects familiar by repetition, and for some of them we have evolved what appear to us satisfactory explanations. But these monuments are as yet too isolated and—more important still—we have not the backing of contemporary comments to feel sure of our ground. In future times, when more material has accumulated and the key to the Cretan language has been found, the outlook may well be different. At present, then, we are at the somewhat fascinating stage when in order to find a meaning for Cretan objects we must use our imagination—always within the bounds, of course, of what the knowledge we do have of the subject permits.

A cast of a bronze statuette of a galloping bull with a youth standing on his back is readily connected with other "bull-leaping" scenes, such as the famous fresco from Knossos and the steatite vase from Hagia Triada (No. 40 and Case J in our collection). The forward rush of the bull and the contrast of its powerful body with the slim figure of the youth are very happily rendered in this statuette. But it, no more

<sup>1</sup>Shown in Case H 2 of the First Classical Room.